

REMARKS

Status of Claims

Claims 1, 3, 4 and 6-9 are currently pending in this application. Claims 1, 3 and 4 have been indicated as allowable. Only claims 6-9 have been rejected. No claims have been canceled or added. Claims 6 and 9 have been amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 1. Applicants respectfully request entry of the above amendments as the above amendments raise no issues of new matter and places the claims in condition for allowance.

Rejection under 35 USC 103(a)

The Examiner rejects claims 6-9 as obvious over JP 08-040026 (JP '026) in view of JP 05-024418 (JP '418). Applicants traverse the rejection and respectfully request the withdrawal thereof.

Applicants have amended independent claims 6 and 9 to incorporate the limitations of claim 1 that were not present in claims 6 and 9. Inasmuch as, claim 1 is allowable over the cited art, amended claims 6 and 9 should also be allowable. As such, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Conclusion

As Applicants have addressed and overcome all rejections in the Office Action, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections be withdrawn and that the claims be allowed.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Kecia Reynolds (Reg. No. 47,021) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.17 and 1.136(a), Applicant(s) respectfully petition(s) for a two (2) month extension of time for filing a reply in connection with the present application, and the required fee of \$420.00 is attached hereto.

Application No. 09/873,238


If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By 

Joseph A. Kolasch, #22,463


JAK/KJR/crt
0229-0645P

P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000